

IN THE MATTER OF: :  
 :  
New York Avenue Beach Bar: :  
LLC : Show Cause  
t/a Halftime Sports Bar : Hearing  
1427 H Street, NE :  
 :  
Case No. 15-251-00033 :

May 27, 2015

The Alcoholic Beverage Control Board met in the Alcoholic Beverage Control Hearing Room, Reeves Building, 2000 14th Street, N.W., Suite 400S, Washington, D.C. 20009, Chairperson Ruthanne Miller, presiding.

**PRESENT:**

RUTHANNE MILLER, Chairperson  
NICK ALBERTI, Member  
DONALD BROOKS, Member  
HECTOR RODRIGUEZ, Member  
JAMES SHORT, Member  
HERMAN JONES, Member  
MIKE SILVERSTEIN, Member

1 P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

2 2:52 p.m.

3 MS. GEPHARDT: I have a representation  
4 to make about that.

5 CHAIR MILLER: Okay.

6 MS. GEPHARDT: So Mr. Graham came here  
7 about 12:45 for the hearing. Downstairs, they  
8 told him that ABRA was closed. He said, well, I  
9 have a hearing on the fourth floor, they said,  
10 you're not allowed up on the fourth floor, so  
11 they turned him away. He went back to his  
12 business in Clinton, Maryland.

13 CHAIR MILLER: Oh, my goodness.

14 MS. GEPHARDT: I spoke to him on the  
15 phone and he said, honestly, I have work to do.  
16 I'm not coming back. He's like, if you want to  
17 reschedule, I can --

18 CHAIR MILLER: Oh, I didn't realize he  
19 was going back to Clinton, Maryland.

20 MS. GEPHARDT: So obviously, you know,  
21 they didn't have the word down there, but he  
22 showed up for a hearing. So that's the

1 situation. He did say that he greased the OIC, I  
2 can present it in his absence, but obviously --

3 (Off the record comments)

4 CHAIR MILLER: I think we'll probably  
5 confer with counsel just to decide exactly how to  
6 proceed.

7 MS. GEPHARDT: Okay.

8 CHAIR MILLER: And I didn't really --  
9 just for the record, I should put on the record  
10 what case we were talking about. Yes, Case  
11 Number 15-251-00033. You want to just identify  
12 yourself for the record?

13 MS. GEPHARDT: This is Chrissy  
14 Gephardt. I'm from the Office of the Attorney --

15 CHAIR MILLER: What's wrong?

16 MS. GEPHARDT: Oh, Chrissy Gephardt,  
17 here on behalf of the Office of the Attorney  
18 General in matter of Halftime Sports Bar, 15-251-  
19 00033.

20 CHAIR MILLER: Okay. So I think --

21 (Off the record comments)

22 MEMBER SILVERSTEIN: The choice is

1       either to continue the case or hear the OIC from  
2       one side. I don't think we can do that.

3               MEMBER JONES: I don't think it's  
4       appropriate.

5               CHAIR MILLER: He waived his  
6       appearance, correct?

7               MS. GEPHARDT: Wait, what?

8               CHAIR MILLER: Did he waive his  
9       appearance for the OIC?

10              MS. GEPHARDT: Waive his appearance?  
11       I mean, he just told me on the phone that, if you  
12       want to proceed with the OIC without me, you can  
13       do it, but --

14              CHAIR MILLER: Right.

15              MEMBER ALBERTI: So he told you on the  
16       phone that he was too busy to come back from  
17       Upper Marlboro, is that correct?

18              MEMBER JONES: From Clinton.

19              MEMBER ALBERTI: Or Clinton.

20              MS. GEPHARDT: From Clinton. Yes.  
21       Yes. He just said, look, I've returned to work,  
22       you know, because he came here at 12:45, so he

1 returned to work. He already started back with  
2 his business.

3 MEMBER SHORT: So, Mr. Gephardt,  
4 you're saying that --

5 MEMBER ALBERTI: He started back at  
6 his business?

7 MEMBER SHORT: Nick, if you don't  
8 mind.

9 MEMBER ALBERTI: All right.

10 MEMBER SHORT: You said he was here in  
11 this building and the guards told him he couldn't  
12 come up to the fourth floor.

13 MS. GEPHARDT: Yes.

14 MEMBER SHORT: Okay.

15 MS. GEPHARDT: They turned him away.

16 MEMBER ALBERTI: What time did he call  
17 you?

18 MS. GEPHARDT: Well, now I started to  
19 panic because I didn't -- you know, that's when -

20 -

21 MEMBER ALBERTI: What time did you  
22 speak with him?

1 MS. GEPHARDT: I spoke with him at --  
2 what time did we recess before lunch?

3 CHAIR MILLER: 1:30.

4 MS. GEPHARDT: I talked to him about  
5 1:45.

6 MEMBER ALBERTI: I am troubled by the  
7 licensee's -- what time is this hearing  
8 scheduled?

9 MS. GEPHARDT: 1:30.

10 MEMBER ALBERTI: Okay.

11 CHAIR MILLER: And he was here on  
12 time.

13 MEMBER ALBERTI: Yes, but he should  
14 have known the potential for this hearing to go  
15 on for a couple hours and so --

16 CHAIR MILLER: But he was turned away.

17 MEMBER ALBERTI: Wait, wait, wait, can  
18 I finish? And so I don't understand --

19 MEMBER SILVERSTEIN: He can't come up  
20 if he was told he could not come upstairs. He  
21 was here and --

22 MEMBER SHORT: He was turned away by

1 the guards.

2 MEMBER SILVERSTEIN: The guard  
3 downstairs.

4 MEMBER ALBERTI: May I finish?

5 MEMBER SHORT: Sure.

6 MEMBER ALBERTI: So he knew that this  
7 hearing was going to cut into his afternoon, so  
8 this excuse that, well, he can't come back, he  
9 needs to continue with his business doesn't hold  
10 water for me.

11 CHAIR MILLER: Okay.

12 MEMBER ALBERTI: I mean, he is not  
13 that far outside the city. He could have come  
14 back. He could have been back here by now and it  
15 should have been on his plans that he might be  
16 engaged until this hour. So this excuse that,  
17 oh, he has something else to do doesn't hold  
18 water for me.

19 MEMBER SHORT: If the government  
20 official told him downstairs he can't come  
21 upstairs and that ABRA is closed, and he left --

22 MEMBER ALBERTI: But he was told at

1 11:45 -- Mr. Jones, go ahead.

2 MEMBER JONES: So I don't know what he  
3 was told. I don't think anyone in here knows  
4 what he was told. Did anyone see him here at  
5 11:30?

6 MS. GEPHARDT: No, but interestingly,  
7 I was downstairs sitting on the couch watching  
8 the security guards and he described them to me.  
9 He says, you know, that woman with the curly hair  
10 with the light skin, he said, she told me that I  
11 wasn't allowed up on the fourth floor. And he  
12 name the other security guard by the way she  
13 looked, so I mean, he definitely, I mean, gave a  
14 physical description, so he definitely was here.

15 MEMBER JONES: So based on the  
16 feedback you received from him you believe that  
17 he actually was here at some point.

18 MS. GEPHARDT: Yes, and in fact --

19 MEMBER JONES: Okay.

20 MS. GEPHARDT: -- it's funny, there  
21 was two people here, an attorney, two attorneys,  
22 and I was telling them, they were like, are you



1 going to have a hearing? And I said, well, no,  
2 my client's not coming, no, not my client, the  
3 licensee is not coming and she says, oh, yes,  
4 they didn't let us up either. We had to convince  
5 them to let us up on the fourth floor.

6 MEMBER JONES: Okay. So --

7 MS. GEPHARDT: I kept telling them  
8 that we have a hearing.

9 MEMBER JONES: -- the story holds  
10 water in the sense that the officials, excuse me,  
11 the individuals manning the gate at the front  
12 were telling people that they weren't allowed to  
13 come up.

14 MS. GEPHARDT: Right.

15 MEMBER JONES: And that was  
16 independently --

17 MS. GEPHARDT: They obviously didn't  
18 have the whole story.

19 MEMBER JONES: -- verified by  
20 individuals that were separate and distinct from  
21 the party that were up here.

22 MS. GEPHARDT: Right.

1                   MEMBER JONES: Okay. So given that,  
2 I'm fine with postponing. I'm not comfortable  
3 with just hearing the OIC, but I would vote to  
4 postpone.

5                   MEMBER ALBERTI: I will point out that  
6 he was told, we know for a fact he was told by,  
7 Ms. Gephardt at 1:45 that the hearing would go  
8 forward, could go forward, so regardless of what  
9 the guards at the desk told him, less than --  
10 about an hour ago he was told that the hearing  
11 could go forward.

12                  MEMBER JONES: I don't disagree or  
13 challenge that. I think, for me, there are  
14 mitigating circumstances, and there very rarely  
15 are, but if he was here and he was told he  
16 couldn't come upstairs, I can certainly -- having  
17 operated a small business of my own, I can  
18 certainly appreciate having being "given the in-  
19 and-out treatment", so if he's already back at  
20 his place of business, he's probably made  
21 arrangements to facilitate that at this point,  
22 regardless of whether he thought the case was

1 going to go for two hours or not, once he was  
2 told it was not going to happen, he may have made  
3 arrangements to be at his workplace, sent people  
4 home, called people in, scheduled meetings,  
5 whatever the case may be.

6 So given that there seems to be some  
7 credence and credibility to his story that he was  
8 told not to come up, I'm fine with accepting a  
9 postpone.

10 CHAIR MILLER: Okay. Anybody else who  
11 hasn't spoken yet? Yes, Mr. Silverstein.

12 MEMBER BROOKS: No, I agree with Board  
13 Member Jones.

14 CHAIR MILLER: Oh, that's Mr. Brooks.  
15 Okay. Mr. Silverstein.

16 MEMBER SILVERSTEIN: I don't think we  
17 have any choice but to offer the licensee some  
18 slack. I'm, personally, willing to conditionally  
19 accept the OIC if it can be verified that he had  
20 known what it was and approved it. And then not  
21 requiring him to come in again and go through  
22 this because it was, in fact, our agent, the

1 security guard downstairs, who told him he could  
2 not come here. It's an extraordinary  
3 circumstance, I'll buy that, but if it can be  
4 verified by our staff, and if he is willing to  
5 accept that, then I have no objection to that.

6 CHAIR MILLER: Okay. Mr. Rodriguez?

7 MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Counsel, do we have  
8 any indication that all the guards were telling  
9 people this or just that one guard? I mean, I  
10 find it unusual that a guard would not be  
11 informed properly.

12 MS. GEPHARDT: No, he said just the  
13 two guards at the front, the ones that, I guess,  
14 put your cellphone through the line. I don't  
15 know how they work, but there's two women, at  
16 least today, up front, and they both said that he  
17 couldn't access the fourth floor.

18 MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Right. And at no  
19 time were the guards told, actually, that our  
20 offices were closed, right? This is not official  
21 information.

22 CHAIR MILLER: Can I say something for

1 the record, though, we did send our staff home  
2 early and so there wasn't anybody at the front  
3 desk to receive people, so it makes sense that  
4 they may have said that, you know, it was closed.

5 MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Okay. Some people  
6 were sent home.

7 CHAIR MILLER: Yes, they were.

8 MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Okay. All right.

9 CHAIR MILLER: Mr. Short?

10 MEMBER SHORT: I just was looking at  
11 my Internet and the District Government posted,  
12 due to problems with the air conditioning, this  
13 is the District Government Web site, the  
14 Alcoholic Beverage Regulation Administration  
15 office is closed at noon today, May 27th. The  
16 Alcoholic Beverage Control Board will hold its  
17 final hearing for today at 1:30 p.m. regarding  
18 Case 15-251-00033.

19 MEMBER JONES: Which is this case.

20 MEMBER ALBERTI: That's this case.

21 CHAIR MILLER: Yes.

22 MEMBER SILVERSTEIN: How would he see

1 that?

2 CHAIR MILLER: Yes, how did he --

3 MEMBER ALBERTI: So he was on notice.

4 MEMBER SILVERSTEIN: No, he was not on  
5 notice.

6 MEMBER SHORT: So what I'm saying is,  
7 if the District Government posted this, what were  
8 they telling the guards to tell people downstairs  
9 about ABRA?

10 CHAIR MILLER: I don't know.

11 MEMBER SHORT: I don't know either.

12 I'm just still saying, you know --

13 CHAIR MILLER: I don't think we should  
14 be debating whether or not to do something to the  
15 licensee because he's not here, because I think  
16 there's, as Mr. Jones said, certainly, mitigating  
17 circumstances. I certainly believe that he was  
18 here and sent home. I think the only question is  
19 whether or not to hear, I think anyway, an offer-  
20 in-compromise or just to postpone.

21 MEMBER ALBERTI: Actually, I think  
22 there are two choices, in my book, either

1 postpone it or go forward with a hearing ex  
2 parte. I don't think the majority of the Board  
3 Members want to go through ex parte, so I think  
4 the only reasonable choice for us is to postpone  
5 this and I suggest that you make that  
6 recommendation and we just get out of here.

7 CHAIR MILLER: Mr. Jones?

8 MEMBER JONES: Yes --

9 MEMBER ALBERTI: That is on the  
10 record.

11 CHAIR MILLER: Can we hear Mr. Jones,  
12 please?

13 MEMBER ALBERTI: No, the Chair will  
14 put that as a motion.

15 CHAIR MILLER: I'm not ready to make  
16 a motion. Did you want to say something, Mr.  
17 Jones? Go ahead.

18 MEMBER JONES: So I would feel very  
19 uncomfortable hearing an OIC without the other  
20 party present to confirm their willingness or  
21 acceptance of said OIC, and I certainly wouldn't  
22 be comfortable with starting a precedence of

1 doing phone acceptance of OIC. I think that's  
2 ridiculous in its face, and is a -- I can't  
3 support that notion in any way, shape, or form.

4 CHAIR MILLER: Okay. So is it the  
5 consensus of the Board to postpone this hearing?  
6 Okay. So I'll move to postpone. All those in  
7 favor, so aye.

8 (Chorus of ayes)

9 CHAIR MILLER: All those opposed?

10 MEMBER SILVERSTEIN: No.

11 CHAIR MILLER: All those abstaining?

12 Motion passes, 6-1-0. Mr. Silverstein opposed,  
13 so we will give you a new date as soon as our  
14 counsel can come up with a --

15 MEMBER SILVERSTEIN: I was opposing.

16 CHAIR MILLER: I know.

17 MEMBER SILVERSTEIN: Madam Chair, I  
18 was opposing.

19 CHAIR MILLER: I know. That's what I  
20 said.

21 MEMBER SILVERSTEIN: You said Mr.  
22 Jones, I believe.



1 CHAIR MILLER: I did?

2 MEMBER SILVERSTEIN: Used to that.

3 CHAIR MILLER: Okay. Mr. Silverstein  
4 was opposed, if I didn't say that, and, Ms.  
5 Gephardt, we will get back to you and the  
6 Respondent with another date.

7 MS. GEPHARDT: Okay. Thank you.

8 CHAIR MILLER: Thank you very much.

9 Okay. So now I just have to -- oh, Martha?  
10 Here's legal. I just have to read the closed  
11 meeting. What's the date for next week? June  
12 3rd? Okay. As Chairperson of the Alcoholic  
13 Beverage Control Board for the District of  
14 Columbia and in accordance with Section 405 of  
15 the Open Meetings Amendment Act of 2010, I move  
16 that the ABC Board hold a closed meeting on June  
17 3, 2015 for the purpose of seeking legal advice  
18 from our counsel on the matters identified on the  
19 Board's agenda for June 3, 2015, as published in  
20 the D.C. Register on May 29, 2015. Is there a  
21 second?

22 MEMBER BROOKS: Second.

1 CHAIR MILLER: Mr. Brooks has seconded  
2 the motion. I'll now take a roll call vote on  
3 the motion before us now that it's been seconded.  
4 Mr. Brooks.

5 MEMBER BROOKS: I agree.

6 CHAIR MILLER: Mr. Alberti.

7 MEMBER ALBERTI: I agree.

8 CHAIR MILLER: Mr. Rodriguez.

9 MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: I agree.

10 CHAIR MILLER: Ms. Miller agrees. Mr.  
11 Silverstein.

12 MEMBER SILVERSTEIN: I agree.

13 CHAIR MILLER: And Mr. Jones.

14 MEMBER JONES: I agree.

15 CHAIR MILLER: It appears that the  
16 motion has passed by a 6-0-0 vote. I therefore  
17 give notice that the ABC Board will hold this  
18 aforementioned closed meeting. Pursuant to Open  
19 Meetings Amendment Act of 2010, notice will also  
20 be posted on the ABC Board hearing room bulletin  
21 board, placed on an electronic calendar on ABRA's  
22 Web site, and published in the D.C. Register in

1 as timely a manner as practicable.

2 As Chairperson of the Alcoholic  
3 Beverage Control Board for the District of  
4 Columbia, and in accordance with Section 405 of  
5 the Open Meetings Amendment Act of 2010, I move  
6 that the ABC Board hold a closed meeting on June  
7 3, 2015 for the purpose of discussing and hearing  
8 reports concerning ongoing or planned  
9 investigation of alleged criminal or civil  
10 misconduct or violations of law or regulations,  
11 and seeking legal advice from our counsel on the  
12 Board's investigative agenda for June 3, 2015, as  
13 published in the D.C. Register on May 29, 2015.  
14 Is there a second?

15 MEMBER SILVERSTEIN: Second.

16 CHAIR MILLER: Mr. Silverstein  
17 seconded the motion. I'll now take a roll call  
18 vote on the motion before us now that it's been  
19 seconded. Mr. Brooks?

20 MEMBER BROOKS: I agree.

21 CHAIR MILLER: Mr. Alberti.

22 MEMBER ALBERTI: I agree.

1 CHAIR MILLER: Mr. Rodriguez.

2 MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: I agree.

3 CHAIR MILLER: Ms. Miller agrees. Mr.  
4 Silverstein.

5 MEMBER SILVERSTEIN: I agree.

6 CHAIR MILLER: Mr. Jones.

7 MEMBER JONES: I agree.

8 CHAIR MILLER: It appears that the  
9 motion has passed by a 6-0-0 vote. I hereby give  
10 notice that the ABC Board will hold this  
11 aforementioned closed meeting. Pursuant to the  
12 Open Meetings Amendment Act of 2010, notice will  
13 also be posted on the ABC Board hearing room  
14 bulleting board, placed on the electronic on  
15 ABRA's Web site, and published in the D.C.  
16 Register in as timely a manner as practicable.  
17 And that concludes our business for today, May  
18 27, 2015, and we are adjourned.

19 (Whereupon, the hearing in the above-  
20 entitled matter was concluded at 3:09 p.m.)  
21  
22

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